THE FAMILY: ITS FUNCTION

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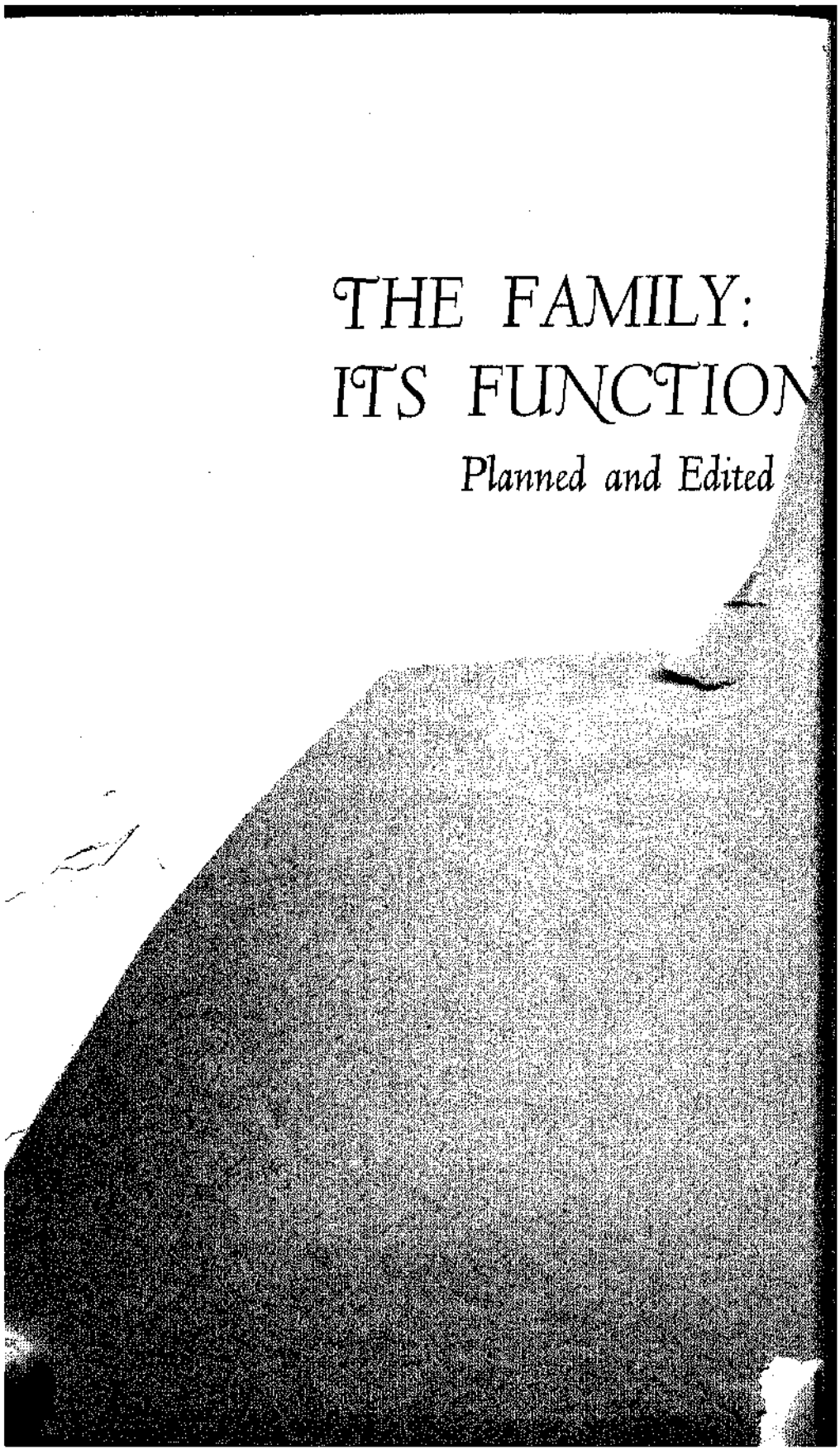

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THE FAMILY: ITS FUNCTION AND DESTINY

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Chapter XVIII

MAX HORKHEIMER

AUTHORITARIANISM AND THE FAMILY TODAY[1]

When we speak of the great revolutions by which the modern era was initiated in both the Old and the New World, we think of the individual rather than of the family. The rights of the individual were the sacred aim for which people stood up against the powers of the past. Man without distinction of persons, each honest man alike, was to make the laws and to be protected by the laws. The battle was fought against oppression by feudal cliques, churches, and foreign potentates. The past was symbolized by hierarchic forms; the future, in contrast, by the individual uniting with his equals. Nevertheless, the consequences of these historical events, though a step forward in the atomization of society, by no means affected all the forms of social bondage of the individual. The commercial man was freed from obsolete tutelage, compulsory labor was abolished, the last prerogatives of the noble over the souls and bodies of his serfs were condemned.

But the birth of modern civilization emancipated the bourgeois family rather than the individual *per se* and thus carried within itself a profound antagonism from the very beginning. The family remained essentially a feudal institution based on the principle of "blood" and thus was thoroughly irrational, whereas an industrialist society (though itself including irrational elements in its very essence) proclaims rationality, the exclusive rule of the principle of calculability and of free exchange following nothing but supply and demand. The modern family owes its social significance as well as its inner difficulties to this

[1] This chapter forms part of the author's continuing collaborative work with Theodore W. Adorno.

inconsistency of society as a whole. The bourgeois *pater familias* always had in him something of the *bourgeois gentilhomme;* the middle-class "good family" always imitated the aristocracy and dreamed of a crest and noble descent. There is no bourgeois family in the strictest sense of the word; in itself it is a contradiction of the principle of individualism—and yet a necessary one. Since the period of its emancipation it has assumed a pseudo-feudal, hierarchical structure. Man, liberated from serfdom in alien households, became the master in his own. Children, however, for whom the world had been a penitentiary throughout the Middle Ages, continued to be slaves well into the nineteenth century. When the separation of state and society, of political and private life, was completed, direct personal dependence survived in the home.

This was made necessary by the material requirements of the social process. In the sphere of manual labor and of numerous other functions in industry and commerce, society had reached a stage at which the direct and inviolable loyalty of the non-related members of *familia* in the old sense, the slaves and serfs, could be replaced by the rational interest of the worker through the labor contract. The relation to the master, divested of the patriarchal paraphernalia, became externalized, reified, and subject to calculating thought. People became conscious of themselves as autonomous economic subjects. Each individual had to look out for himself. Yet the national economy of the nineteenth century, of which the relation between capital and labor in the factory is typical, still included the functioning of the family as an economic unit. Not only had the mechanization of the household not progressed so far as it is today—and even today it constitutes a residue of primordial economic forms—but women, children, and other relatives were necessary for the management of innumerable business units. In the Victorian age the artisan workshop still flourished, the small or middle-sized enterprise was the predominant type of undertaking; the giant concern, the department store, and the retail sales organization of important industries were only in the making. Business administration and management were not yet scientifically regulated and planned. Success in enterprise still depended to a great extent on the solidarity of the family. The sons of middle-class business men were, on the one hand, largely indispensable in their fathers' trade and, on the other, unable to find an equally satisfying position outside it. The daughters were needed in both house and shop. Familial authority in the middle classes was halfway intact.

The power of the father over related or unrelated members of the home, workshop, or manorial estate had always been based on the intrinsic necessity of the direct form of dependence for the life process of society. With the disappearance of this essential factor, the respect of family members for the head of the house, their attachment to the family as a whole, and their loyalty to its symbols dwindled away. The legal framework, by which the family is protected, receives its meaning from the social significance of what it protects. A son's future share in his father's property had been as powerful a motive for obedience as disinheritance was a menace. What appeared as an individual disaster in the world of middle-class proprietors can be faced more quietly in a world in which everybody is an employee. Today, when skill and alertness start playing the decisive role in man's fate, the right of inheritance loses much of its weight.[2] Similar considerations hold true for the daughter. At least in times of war and preparedness industry offers millions of jobs for skilled and unskilled women, which means that work outside the house becomes respectable for them. Rupture with the family therefore loses its terror for the girl as well as for the boy. This changed prospect makes itself felt in the relations of parents and children long before they grow up. Authority in the home assumes an irrational aspect.

In spite of these important changes, the moral and religious ideas, the spiritual images, derived from the structure of the patriarchal family still constitute the core of our culture. Respect for law and order in the state appears to be inseparably tied to the respect of children for their elders. Emotions, attitudes, and beliefs rooted in the family account for the coherence of our system of culture. They form an element of social cement. It appears to be imperative that society keep them alive, for it is a question of the life and death of civilization in its present form. The idea of the nation has not been able to fulfill the functions of the family in this respect. As a structure of co-operating and competing economic forces, the nation supplanted the units of production of the mercantile system. It has proved to be a direct object of devotion in marginal situations, particularly in the hours of danger. The revolutionary wars in which the nation in the modern sense was born have set an example of how individuals can overcome their isola-

[2] The economic changes indicated above are the reasons why this right can be increasingly curtailed and even made illusory by financial and political measures of governments.

tion by means of this image. In everyday life, however, the authority of the nation has seemed to depend on the authority of the family. The only dictatorship in recent times, the Third Reich, which tried to dispense systematically with any mediation between the individual and the state and to push Jacobinism to the extreme, has failed.

The wish to strengthen the family is almost universal; yet it is necessary to bring its basic difficulty to light. If ideas, cherished through the centuries, are rigidly maintained against the course of history instead of being preserved by being developed and transformed, they finally are deserted by truth and turn into empty ideologies—however strongly they may be sustained. Because in dealing with our own traditions we tend to overlook this fateful dilemma, an example from another culture may serve as an illustration. The Chinese family depended to a great extent on the intensive cultivation of the earth. It possessed a small piece of land and developed a great skill in working it. Experience with regard to seasons, pests, and all kinds of dangers and their possible prevention under the conditions of the particular spot involved was the more important since the social environment remained relatively static throughout the centuries. Old and friendly relations with the neighbors, acquaintance with local officials, and a knowledge of ways and means of dealing with friendly or unfriendly invaders were possessions invaluable to a farmer. Age was an advantage, and the father therefore commanded a sincere respect. The role of ancestors in the Chinese religion appears to be a logical consequence of this state of affairs; respect for the father and grandfather was prolonged, extrapolated, and enhanced for the sake of those who were invisible. Once this old structure of the family is destroyed by industrialization, and particularly by mechanized agriculture, the superiority of the father and the venerability of old age will tend to lose their meaning. That particular kind of wisdom will be irrelevant, and the negative aspects of old age will stand out in bold relief. The cult of ancestors, isolated from concrete experience, may then still be propagated and enforced by means of social or even political sanctions, but one day it will appear that this ideology has become hollow. Striking examples of such developments, concerning the family directly as well as religious ideas derived from it, have been furnished in recent European history. They have taught how treacherous the appearance of sound traditions in the family can prove to be.

The more the family as an essential economic unit loses ground in

Western civilization, the more society emphasizes its conventional forms. Since the physiological relationship of man and wife is the residue of all the aspects of the family, this is the focus of conservative concern. It exalts marriage to such an extent that marriage and family tend to become synonyms. Women more than men depend directly on this development. In view of the fundamental patriarchal aspects of society, which have not really changed, women are still at a disadvantage. Not only must they adapt themselves as breadwinners to forms of life molded by and for men, but their historical heritage, their specific education enforced by a masculine society through the centuries, the irrational preference given to men in many careers, and the cultural climate in general create additional problems for the working woman and make her existence psychologically difficult. For these and other reasons women take a tremendous interest in the inviolability of the institution of marriage. In our highly organized society, they are allied with the most efficient groups of mass culture in the defense and propaganda of this aspect of the family. Legislation, churches, literature, radio, and the movies join in fighting the dangers of immorality. Unfortunately, propaganda for marriage cannot replace the awe-inspiring power of the family when it was the most impressive reality in social life. It cannot bring back that naïve and quasi-natural belief in the grandeur of the family by which marriage once received its meaning. Modern rationality has permeated this whole sphere. The unreserved co-operation of all branches of state and local governments, the war against prostitution, the degradation of free love as a vice, the moralistic prescriptions for the synthetic daydreams on the screen and the air, the plugging of romance in the midst of a materialistic culture and for practical reasons—all these factors cannot prevent marriage in its turn from being transformed into a pragmatic affair. It becomes increasingly an expedient relationship which the man must choose in order to enjoy the benefits of cohabitation and in which the woman seeks a certain amount of security. Children are raised not because the tasks of one's own life can be fulfilled only through them but for more or less extrinsic reasons. They never experience the warmth of that second womb which, at times and in certain social strata, the family used to be. At best they are brought up intelligently for the struggle of life.

Whereas at an earlier period the individual knew of himself only as a part of quasi-organic entities, which gave meaning to his life and were constantly present in his acts and ideas, individuals today tend

indeed to become the social atoms into which the bourgeois revolutions, according to their critics, have pulverized society. In this era of mass society man is alone. His name—which once linked him to a place, a past, a destiny—has been turned into a mark of identification, a mere label; his individuality into a set of qualifications. The neutrality of the label corresponds to the fungibility of the labeled. Once he was through and through a master or a servant, a knight or a bondsman: his human substance was defined by the facets of social inequality. Today his place in the social hierarchy does not appear any longer as a part of his own nature; he knows how to differentiate between himself and his role in society.

But this "self," psychologically involved as the personality may be, is the abstract subject of self-interest as proclaimed in nineteenth-century economic and philosophical thought. The modern ego, in so far as it distinguishes itself thus clearly from any debasing social categories, corresponds more adequately to the idea of humanity than did the self-conscience of man in any period of the past. It differs, on the other hand, much more decisively from that idea by its abstractness and inaccessibility. In the development of society this stage is necessary, logical. Only after the ego has learned to conceive of itself as the abstract subject of reason, in contrast to anything concrete, can it identify itself intelligently with the positive forces in humanity and thus regain a new and higher concreteness. For the organic enclaves in modern society this means that form and content stand apart. The actors on the scene of the family remain social atoms, though they play the roles of husbands, wives, and children.

No other institution of our society reveals so clearly the problematic nature of the modern family as the divorce. The French Revolution, which anticipated all the phases and aspects of the coming era, made divorce so easy that marriage was in fact replaced by a mere contractual tie, the only type of relation which is in strict accordance with the individualistic principle. In many social groups today marriage has again been practically abolished by the institution of divorce. Individuals are as exchangeable in marriage as they are in commercial relationships. One enters a new one if it promises to work out better. Each person is identified completely with his or her function for a particular purpose. Everyone remains an abstract center of interests and accomplishments.

The discrepancy between the parents' true character as determined

by modern industrialism and their role in the family is quickly discovered by the children and is largely responsible for the stunted growth of their emotional life, the hardening of their character, their premature transformation into adults. The interaction between the family and general deculturalization becomes a vicious circle. When the children grow up, the roles are played more consciously; to cultivate family ties is the thing to do. But such an attitude cannot check the emaciation of the family. Either the atomization of man will be conquered by more fundamental changes and transformations, or indeed it may prove fatal to this culture. The same economic changes which destroy the family bring about the danger of totalitarianism. The family in crisis produces the attitudes which predispose men for blind submission.

As the family has largely ceased to exercise specific authority over its members, it has become a training ground for authority as such. The old dynamics of familial submission are still operative, but they make for an all-pervasive spirit of adjustment and authoritarian aggressiveness rather than for a furtherance of the interests of the family and its members. Whereas totalitarianism in its German version tried to dispense with the family as an almost superfluous intermediary between the total state and the social atoms, the modern family in fact produces the ideal objects of totalitarian integration. Here is the typical development:

Initially the infant has the same experience of love and hatred of and from his parents as he had throughout the bourgeois age. He soon discovers, however, that the father is by no means the powerful figure, the impartial judge, the generous protector he is pictured to be. The child takes a realistic view and dispenses with all the demands and hopes through which the family in its best periods and in the most cultured classes delayed the radical adjustment of the child to the external world. The socially conditioned weakness of the father, which is not disproved by his occasional outbreaks of masculinity, prevents the child's real identification with him. In earlier times a loving imitation of the self-reliant, prudent man, devoted to his duty, was the source of moral autonomy in the individual. Today the growing child, who instead of the image of a father has received only the abstract idea of arbitrary power, looks for a stronger, more powerful father, for a superfather, as it is furnished by fascist imagery. Whereas authoritarian submissiveness is still being inculcated in the child by the family, the instinctual relation toward the parents is greatly injured. In past pe-

riods, when the father could not play a direct role in the child's upbringing, his place in the child's emotional life was occupied by an uncle, a tutor, a teacher, or some other individual person. Harsh and hardened though he might be, he had at least some human traits, some personal features and gestures that could be imitated, some ideas that could be meditated and argued. Today the father tends to be directly replaced by collective entities, the school class, the sports team, the club, the state. The more family dependence is reduced to a mere psychological function within the soul of the infant, the more abstract and unspecific it becomes in the mind of the adolescent; gradually it tends to lead to a general readiness to accept any authority provided it is strong enough.

This development is being furthered by changes in the mother's role. Not that she treats the child more brutally than in former times; just the opposite. The modern model mother plans the education of her child almost scientifically, from the well-balanced diet to the equally well-balanced ratio between reprimand and friendliness, as recommended by the popular psychological literature. Her whole attitude toward the child becomes rational; even love is administered as an ingredient of pedagogical hygiene.[8] Our society, in the educated, urban classes, promotes a "professional," highly practical attitude even in those women who do not actually earn money but still fulfill their role in the home. They undertake motherhood as a profession, and their attitude toward children is matter of fact and pragmatic. The spontaneity of the mother and her natural, unlimited protectiveness and warmth tend to be dissolved. Therefore, the image of the mother in the minds of children sheds its mystical aura, and the mother cult of adults turns from a mythology in the strict sense of the word into a set of rigid conventions.

Women have paid for their limited admission into the economic world of the male by taking over the behavior patterns of a thoroughly reified society. The consequences reach into the most tender relations between mother and child. She ceases to be a mitigating intermediary between him and cold reality and becomes just another mouthpiece of the latter. Formerly she endowed the child with a feeling of security

[8] Modern psychology and certainly the most progressive magazines are aware of the danger and try to check rationality by more rationality. In motion pictures the enlightened mother is defeated by the kind and understanding friend who introduces Santa Claus at a higher level. Romanticism, however refined and delectable it may be, tends to shift back the problem rather than to solve it.

which allowed him to develop a certain independence. He felt his love for his mother reciprocated and somehow lived on this emotional fund throughout his life. The mother, cut off from the community of the males and despite an unjustified idealization being herself forced into a dependent situation, represented a principle other than reality; she could sincerely dream the dreams of utopia with the child, and she was his natural ally whether she wished it or not. Thus there was a force in his life which allowed him to develop his own individuality concomitantly with his adjustment to the external world. Together with the fact that decisive authority in the house was represented by the father and therefore asserted itself, at least to a minimum, through an intellectual interaction, the role of the mother prevented the adjustment from happening too suddenly and totally and at the expense of individuation. Today, since the child does not experience the mother's unrestricted love, his own capacity for love remains undeveloped. He represses the child in himself (which does not keep him later on from grotesque attempts to act as a child when he wants to have fun) and behaves as a scheming little adult with no consistent independent ego but with a tremendous amount of narcissism. His being hardboiled and at the same time submissive in the face of real power predisposes him for totalitarian forms of life.

The maudlin cult of the mother recently observed in the United States and frequently mistaken for a matriarchal tendency does not contradict her degradation. Rather, this cult is an ideological overcompensation for the abolition of the mother's role. The seizure of the totality of our life by organization, which has transformed the sphere of privacy previously occupied by the family into socially controlled leisure time, has endowed women with the rule over this sphere of organized culture—a rule which, despite the good they may do, also brings to the fore the traditional backwardness of women. This is one of the roots of the phenomenon of "momisms" as described by Philip Wylie. The "mom" is the death mask of the mother. Where she reigns supreme, she often enhances by bigoted and ill-advised activities the same spirit of authoritarian repression which a lack of love and of primary contact with the child promotes unconsciously in the latter.

The role played today by the shadow of the family, or rather by the family as an ideology losing its economic as well as its emotional basis, has been shown in detail by empirical research. One study, focused on the nature and background of the authoritarian personality in this

country, bears directly on our problem.[4] By combining various types of questionnaires, intensive interviews, and projective techniques, the study has endeavored to establish systematically an interconnection between certain character traits and attitudes and overt political and economic opinions which might be regarded as potentially fascist, such as racial prejudice, exaltation of the in-group, aggressive nationalism, labor baiting, and thinly veiled contempt for democratic institutions. This research has endeavored to inquire into the peculiar patterns of authoritarianism prevailing in large sections of today's middle classes.

The findings have shown that subjects who may be regarded as highly susceptible to fascist propaganda profess an ideology calling for rigid, uncritical identification with the family and reveal their absolute submission to familial authority in early infancy. Simultaneously, the underlying spuriousness of the family manifests itself inasmuch as the fascist-minded subjects show, on a deeper level, no genuine attachments to the parents, whom they accept in a thoroughly conventionalized and externalized way. It is this configuration of submissiveness and coldness which more than anything else defines the potential fascist of our time.

The fascist-minded people in the study almost invariably idealized their parents. A typical interviewee answered the question as to whom he regarded as the greatest personalities in history: my parents. This cult of the parents is in most cases based on the adoration of a stern and punitive father. Traces of hostility against the latter are visible, but as a whole resistance against paternal authority is displaced and turned exclusively against the weak, the underdog. Accordingly, family acceptance serves to express the subject's social narcissism. The parents, the siblings, and the whole in-group are always "wonderful people"; the others are "not on the level," slovenly, lowly. Through rigid distinction between those who are "like oneself" and the rest of the world, the authoritarian leanings of the prospective fascist attain an element of inhuman abstractness—glorification of authority *per se*, without any specific idea of the end which the authority is supposed to serve. The authoritarian personality is thoroughly conventionalized and stereotypical. The image of the father is that of a stern, just, suc-

[4] The study, under the title of a "Research Project on Social Discrimination" and sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, has been carried on jointly by the Institute of Social Research and the Berkeley Public Opinion Study Group during the last few years. The senior members of the project are T. W. Adorno, E. Brunswik, D. Levinson, and N. Sanford.

cessful, detached and sometimes generous disciplinarian. That of the mother is composed of the standard attributes of womanhood, such as practical skill, good looks, cleanliness, and health. Where once the agencies of conscience, individual independence, and possible resistance against the pressure of social conformity had their place, the only yardstick left is that of success, popularity, and influence, together with the subject's eagerness to succeed through uninhibited identification with anything that exercises authoritarian strength in reality. No ideal authority, be it religious, moral, or philosophical, is accepted for its own sake; only what is, is recognized. The "unpopular," or whatever is rejected by power, should remain powerless.

Whereas the authoritarian or sado-masochistic character is by no means a novel phenomenon and can be observed throughout the history of middle-class society,[5] it is its peculiar abstractness and callousness which seem to be symptomatic of a world which adheres to familial authority after the inner substance of the family has been dissolved. Here the abstract glorification of the family is paralleled by an almost complete lack of any concrete emotional ties, either positive or negative, to the parents. Consequently the whole emotional life of the authoritarian character reveals traits of shallowness and coldness often approaching phenomena observed among certain psychotics. Foremost among these traits is the universal rejection of pity—of that very same quality which used to reflect more than anything else the mother's love for her child.

The structure of the subjects' emotional attachment to the parents as objects of cathexis was closely scrutinized in the interviews. In accordance with the over-all picture of the authoritarian personality it was established that his early rebellion against the father is repressed and retained on an unconscious level, coming to the fore only in a displaced form as "authoritarian aggressiveness." Moreover, submissiveness to the father works even today as a crucial pattern in the forming of social and political beliefs in men. Frequently it is reflected through aggressiveness. Among boys, the conscious rejection of love for the mother proved to be of no less importance. In his early adjustment to the requirements of life, the boy receives the impression that the mother be-

[5] Cf. the section on social psychology by Erich Fromm, "Studien über Autorität und Familie," in *Schriften des Instituts für Sozialforschung*, herausgegeben von Max Horkheimer (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1936).

cause of her sex is something weak and contemptible. He senses the ambivalence in her official exaltation and looks upon her as a member of an inferior race. The coldness and shallowness of the authoritarian character can largely be expressed as the emotional consequences of this rejection. Toughness, ruthlessness, and the forced display of masculinity, all leading to politico-fascist ideologies, are genetically linked with a disturbed relationship toward the mother or, perhaps even more, with the lack of any genuine relationship with her. This, however, is probably not even the most significant implication of the stunted relationship between mother and child. What seems to be most seriously affected is the subjects' tolerance for the opposite sex. Anti-femininity based on rejection of the mother sets the pattern for the subsequent rejection of everything that is deemed "different." Out-groups rejected by fascists, particularly the Jews, are often fancied as showing traits of femininity, such as weakness, emotionalism, lack of self-discipline, and sensuality. Contempt for the traits of the opposite sex in one's own sex seems to be regularly connected with a highly generalized intolerance of what is different. This result suggests a deep-rooted affinity between homosexuality, authoritarianism, and the present decay of the family. The strict dichotomy between masculinity and femininity and the taboo of any psychological transitions from one to the other correspond to an over-all tendency to think in dichotomies and stereotypes.

The list below contains many details whose connection with the structure of the modern family cannot be discussed in this chapter, but it may help to illustrate what we know from empirical studies about the traits of the authoritarian personality. It goes without saying that this complicated phenomenon cannot adequately be expressed by any kind of enumeration but demands a more dynamic conceptual framework. No attempt is made here to define the individual traits in precise terms; some of them overlap, others seem to be in conflict. The order in which the traits are given is haphazard and does not represent any ranking with regard to importance or frequency of occurrence. It should be kept in mind that the empirical findings do not show that any individual who possesses one or several of these traits is necessarily a prospective fascist or that a fascist must exhibit all of them. Yet, if we find that these traits occur much more frequently in one group than in another, the probability is that susceptibility to totalitarian propaganda is greater in the first than in the second.

The authoritarian personality adheres rigidly to conventional values, at the expense of any autonomous moral decision. (The Jews are "aggressive," which, for him, is sufficient justification for the sternest measures.)

He thinks in terms of black and white. White is the in-group, black the out-group. Anything different is violently rejected.

He hates whatever is weak, calling it a "burden" (unemployed) or a "misfit" (Jews).

He is violently opposed to self-examination, never questions his own motives, but always blames others or external, physical, or "natural" circumstances for any mishap.

He thinks in stereotypes: the Irish are quick-tempered and lazy, the Jews cunning and cheating, and so on. The individual appears as a mere specimen of its kind.

He emphasizes invariable characteristics (e.g., the "blood strain") as against social determinants.

He thinks in hierarchical terms—"people at the top, at the bottom, and so forth."

He is a pseudo-conservative; that is, he has surrendered to the maintenance of the *status quo*, free enterprise, and the like but is so vindictive against all political opponents that it becomes clear that he has a strong affinity to despotism: "something must be done about it."

He believes in the "average," with which he identifies himself, as against the "highbrow," the "snob," and so forth.

He regards success, popularity, and such criteria as the sole measuring-rod of human value.

Whereas his own value system reveals his strong lust for power, he always accuses the out-group of power aspirations, plotting, and the like. (This is just an example of his over-all "projective" attitude.)

He considers religion important only from a pragmatic viewpoint—as a means to keep others at bay. Essentially he is anti-religious and "naturalistic" in the sense of unquestionably accepting natural selection as the only right principle.

He is thoroughly "authoritarian," accepting authority for its own sake and demanding its rigid application. His repressed rebellion against authority is directed exclusively against the weak.

With regard to sex, he overemphasizes the idea of "normality." The man values masculinity above anything else; the woman wants to represent the ideal of femininity.

He tends to reject the subjective, the imaginative, the tender-minded individual. He acknowledges no pity for the poor. His emotional life is essentially cold and shallow.

His general tendency toward externalization makes him susceptible to all kinds of superstition unless his educational level is very high.

He is contemptuous of men in general, believes in their inherently bad nature, and often assumes a cynical philosophy contradictory to his conventional acceptance of "ideal values."

He always emphasizes the "positive" and rejects critical attitudes as "destructive," but in his spontaneous fantasy life he reveals strong destructive tendencies. He thinks in terms of world catastrophes and sees "evil forces" at work everywhere.

He is generally more interested in means than in ends. To him things are more important than humans. He regards human beings mainly as tools or as obstacles —as things.

He conceals his stereotyped inhuman attitude by personalization. When he puts the blame on others he thinks not of an objective series of events but of incompetent, dishonest, or corrupt men. Conversely, he expects everything good from strong men, from "leaders."

While maintaining the stand of sexual purity, morality, or at least normality, he is obsessed by sexual ideas and senses "vice" everywhere. When he speaks of the evil forces, he likes to dwell upon orgies, sex perversions, and so on.

He idealizes his parents. This often merely conceals his hostility. No strong emotional ties.

He thinks in terms of exchange, of equivalents, and often complains about not having received as much as he gave.

He is more interested in "what he gets out of people" than in any true affection. He is "manipulative."

He is, at least superficially, "well adjusted"; he reveals psychotic rather than neurotic symptoms. He believes in a number of ideas which, though generally accepted by his type, in extreme cases approximate delusions (international conspiracy).

He attributes an exaggerated importance to the ideas of purity, neatness, cleanliness, and such characteristics.

He complains about the base, materialistic motivations of others but himself thinks strongly in terms of money.

He professes official optimism; pessimism is decadent. Despite his general contempt for his contemporaries, he denies conflicts not only in himself but also in the family and group. They are all wonderful people.

He is continuously concerned with social status, his own as well as that of his family.

Additional light has been thrown upon the complex relationship between the family and society by another research project for analyzing authoritarian traits and predispositions in children.[6] The findings seem

[6] This project, also sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, was a joint undertaking by the Institute of Social Research and the Institute of Child Welfare in Berkeley. The directors were T. W. Adorno, E. F. Brunswik, and H. Jones.

to reveal that the over-all picture of the authoritarian personality is valid even for the nine-to-fourteen-year age group. In one important respect, however, the preliminary results of this research contradicted the hypotheses as they were derived from the study on adults reported above. It had been anticipated that those children who submit most readily to the discipline of the parents and the school would also be those who revealed predominantly authoritarian character traits, whereas the more rebellious and refractory ones would be thoroughly anti-authoritarian. This assumption was faulty. The "good" boys and girls—those who are essentially non-aggressive—are actually the ones who least evince the traits on our list. The difficult, unruly children, in contrast, are those who turn against the weak and exalt the strong. The authoritarian character's conventionalism and his concern with correctness and the "things to be done" seem to be acquired during adolescence, or even later, because then the effect of reality in endorsing conventional values is overpowering. The prospective fascists, then, seem to be those who in childhood were somehow crude and rough and "uncivilized." Their lack of genuine family cathexis prepares them to transfer to their "gang" the feeling for authority acquired earlier and to accept the gang's code of prowess and violence without mustering any moral resistance against it.

Casual observation of the behavior of boy gangs corroborates this assumption. It is likely that the aggressiveness of these children, which is retained by them in later life but becomes more or less repressed and rationalized, is due to the dwindling of the positive, protective aspect of the family. These children behave like little savages because they have no psychological shelter and feel that they must continuously "look after themselves." In a cold and inscrutable world, they suspect everybody of being their enemy and leap at his throat. They revert to the cynical principle of early bourgeois philosophy, *homo homini lupus*. What they suffer from is probably not too strong and sound a family but rather a lack of family. In this respect the conservative statements on the cause of juvenile delinquency touch upon certain basic social factors frequently clouded by more differentiated and progressive psychological theories. Whereas the family, as an ideology, works in favor of repressive authoritarianism, it becomes manifest that the family, as a reality, is also the most profound and effective counter-agency against that relapse into barbarism by which each human being is menaced during his development.

The National-Socialists who knew so shrewdly how to exploit the social and psychological mechanisms indicated in this chapter recognized at the same time the inherent antagonism between the family in its genuine sense and the barbarian world for which they stood. Although they exalted the family in ideology as indispensable to a society based on the "blood" principle, in reality they suspected and attacked the family as a shelter against mass society. They looked on it as a virtual conspiracy against the totalitarian state. Their attitude toward the family was similar to their ambivalent policies toward religion, free enterprise, and the constitutional state. The problem today is whether the complicated interaction of these forces was especially German or is indicative of a more universal historical trend.